



Department of Justice

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TEXAS COMPANY CHARGED WITH CONSPIRACY IN CONNECTION WITH KICKBACK SCHEME

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- A Texas company was charged today with conspiring to commit mail and wire fraud in connection with a kickback scheme used to defraud a customer, the Department of Justice announced.

A one-count felony charge was filed in U.S. District Court in Atlanta against Eurotech Industries, Inc. (Eurotech) of Houston, Texas, for participating, from early 1996 until at least May 1998, in a conspiracy to defraud the Henry Pratt Company of Aurora, Illinois. Henry Pratt is a manufacturer and supplier of equipment used in water and wastewater treatment plants, nuclear power plants, and other industrial installations.

According to the charge, Eurotech acted as a front company to help deceive the Pratt Company as to the true source of surplus equipment it was purchasing. Pursuant to the charged conspiracy, kickbacks were made to a Pratt employee who arranged for Pratt to make those purchases from Eurotech.

“This type of scheme deprives companies of their right to fair and competitive pricing” said James M. Griffin, Deputy Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Antitrust Division’s Criminal Enforcement Program.

Today's charge is the sixth to arise out of an ongoing investigation in Atlanta of the water and wastewater treatment equipment industry being conducted jointly by the Antitrust Division's Atlanta Field Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Atlanta.

Eurotech is charged with violating 18 U.S.C. § 371, which carries a maximum fine of \$500,000 for a corporation. The maximum fine may be increased to twice the gain derived from the crime or twice the loss suffered by the victims of the crime, if either of those amounts is greater than the statutory maximum fine.

Anyone with information concerning bid rigging or kickbacks in the water and wastewater treatment equipment industry should contact the Atlanta Office of the Antitrust Division at (404) 331-7100.

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